



93 West Main Street
Clinton, CT 06413
1-860-664-6059

Testimony of David Radka to the Environment Committee

March 7, 2014

**RE: HB 5420, AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDS FOR WATER SUPPLIES IN
CONTAMINATED AREAS**

Connecticut Water thanks the Environment Committee for raising HB 5420 and supports the concept of revising section 22a-471 to provide for appropriately-sized infrastructure installed under the potable water program. As a public water utility serving nearly 90,000 customers, or approximately 300,000 people in 56 towns in Connecticut, we work hard to ensure communities have access to an adequate supply of water for domestic, commercial and fire protection purposes.

DEEP's Potable Water Program was created in the early 1980s to make safe drinking water available to residents whose well water was found to be polluted as a result of improper chemical storage, handling, or disposal activities. When a responsible party cannot be identified, the Potable Water Program would historically step in to provide affected individuals with a short-term supply of drinking water – typically bottled water or carbon filters. The Potable Water Program also works with the municipality to arrange for an engineering report to provide recommendations and alternatives for the long-term provision of potable water.

Often, the most cost-effective and sustainable long-term solution for providing potable water to a contaminated area involves the extension of water from a nearby public water system. Such extensions are typically funded in part through a grant to the affected municipality. Under existing rules, however, limitations placed on the size of a water main to narrowly serve the affected area can result in infrastructure that constrains fire protection, economic development, and other legitimate water supply needs of the area.

Connecticut Water supports revisions to section 22a-471 that would allow for the main to be adequately sized to meet public health, firefighting and economic development needs or at least would allow the water utility to fund the cost difference between, say, an 8 inch and 12 inch water main, when a larger diameter water main would better serve the community's long-term needs, in a way that does not penalize the municipality by withholding grant monies. We feel such a modest revision to the Potable Water Program would facilitate the provision of clean drinking water to contaminated properties, while simultaneously ensuring adequate water is made available to meet the region's long-term needs.

We thank the Committee for raising this bill and ask for your support of HB 5420. We stand ready to work with the members of the Committee, state agencies, and other stakeholders to revise the language, as appropriate to accomplish the desired goals of the legislation.

###
